

# Succinct Translation of the Kan Ying Pien

By Brian Bye Sheng Chung

太上曰：「禍福無門，惟人自召；善惡之報，如影隨形。」

**The Illustrious One (Lao Tzu) states: Woe and weal have no fixed ways of manifesting, and are summoned solely by people themselves. The rewards of virtue or vice follows each like a shadow following the form.**

是以天地有司過之神，依人所犯輕重，以奪人算。算減則貧耗，多逢憂患；人皆惡之，刑禍隨之，吉慶避之，惡星災之；算盡則死。

**Between Heaven and Earth dwell the Demigods of Justice—they weigh the evil deeds of each person and reduce their lifespans by counts of 100 days. As their lifespans are being reduced, poverty and decay also manifest, with sorrow and suffering being often encountered. The people despise them. Prosecutions and misfortunes follow them. Fortune and celebration evades them. Evil omens afflict them with disasters. And when all their lifespan counts have been fined away, they die.**

又有三台北斗神君，在人頭上，錄人罪惡，奪其紀算。又有三尸神，在人身中，每到庚申日，輒上詣天曹，言人罪過。月晦之日，灶神亦然。凡人有過，大則奪紀，小則奪算。其過大小，有數百事，欲求長生者，先須避之。

**There are also the Three Divine Triumvirs atop people's heads—recording all their evil deeds and shortening their lifespans. Moreover, the spirits of the body who dwell within each person reports to the Heavenly Tribunal every two months, and so too the Hearth Deity at the end of each lunar month. Serious transgressions are punished with the loss of twelve years of lifespan, and small offences by counts of 100 days. There are**

**hundreds of small and serious offences that all who wish to live a long life must know.**

### **Virtues:**

是道則進，非道則退-To walk on the path of good and retreat from the path of evil

不履邪徑，不欺暗室-To never stray nor do covert wickedness

積德累功-To accrue merits and do good deeds

慈心於物-To love all animals and cherish all forms of life

忠孝友悌-To be loyal, filial, reliable and trustworthy

正己化人-To be a model of virtue, and encourage others to do good deeds and study the Dharma etc.

矜孤恤寡-To aid orphans and widows

敬老懷幼-To support the elderly and take care of the young

昆蟲草木，猶不可傷-To not harm even the little insects and grass

宜憫人之凶，樂人之善-To pity others and embody vicarious joy

濟人之急-To meet another's immediate needs

救人之危-To save those in danger

見人之得，如己之得- To see another's gain as one's own

見人之失，如己之失-To see another loss as one's own

不彰人短，不炫己長-To not gossip about another's faults, nor gloat over one's own skills, privileges and advantages

遏惡揚善-To not tattle on others, but praise the good of others

推多取少-To give much and take little

受辱不怨-To be patient and slow to anger

受寵若驚-To be cautious and modest when receiving favor

施恩不求報-To give without strings attached

與人不追悔-To never regret or revoke a gift

所謂善人，人皆敬之，天道佑之，福祿隨之，眾邪遠之，神靈衛之；所作必成，神仙可冀。欲求天仙者，當立一千三百善；欲求地仙者，當立三百善。

**The virtuous are admired by men, blessed by heaven, and shadowed by blessings and providence. The evil cannot trouble them, the gods guard them and all their endeavours are successful. They may attain immortality. Those who seek heavenly immortality must first do 1300 good deeds, and those who seek earthly immortality must first do 300 good deeds.**

### Vices:

苟或非義而動-To act upon dishonorable and unrighteous thoughts

背理而行-To act contrary to one's conscience

以惡為能-To consider one's evil to be a source of strength

忍作殘害-To be brutal, inhumane and cruel

陰賊良善-To secretly hurt the kind and good

暗侮君親-To deceive one's superiors

慢其先生-To make light of one's teacher

叛其所事-To betray one's fiduciary duty

誑諸無識-To abuse one's expert status to deceive others

謗諸同學-To slander one's colleagues

虛誣詐偽-To be deceptive, dishonest and fraudulent

攻訐宗親-To attack one's family members

剛強不仁-To have a heart of stone and be without mercy

狠戾自用-To be iron willed in reckless behaviour

是非不當，向背乖宜-To praise evil deeds and criticise virtuous acts

虐下取功-To extort or overwork others in order to meet quotas

諂上希旨-To cajole one's superiors in order to earn their favouritism

受恩不感-To be ungrateful after receiving kindness

念怨不休-To harbor grievances unceasingly

輕蔑天民-To treat the people like dirt

擾亂國政-To plunge the governance of the nation into chaos

賞及非義-To reward dishonorable and unjust behaviour

刑及無辜-To punish the innocent

殺人取財-To kill, injure or maim others in order to gain wealth

傾人取位-To get someone fired in order to take their position

誅降戮服-To massacre those who surrender

貶正排賢-To purge the just and sagely

凌孤逼寡-To grind the faces of orphans and widows

棄法受賂-To accept bribes and partake in graft

以直為曲，以曲為直-To call the crooked straight and the straight crooked

入輕為重-To punish misdemeanours as felonies

見殺加怒-To cheer on executions or corporal punishments

知過不改-To know one's faults but refuse to change

知善不為-To know good deeds but refuse to do them

自罪引他-To lie in order to drag others down with you

壅塞方術-To refuse to share one's knowledge

訕謗聖賢-To slander the Wise and Sagely [i.e. Buddhist teachings]

侵凌道德-To bully the virtuous

射飛逐走-To trap animals and shoot birds

發蟄驚棲-To dig up creatures living under the soil

填穴覆巢-To destroy nests and seal off burrows

傷胎破卵-To hurt gravid animals or destroy their eggs

願人有失-To wish that other's fail

毀人成功-To undermine another's success

危人自安-To endanger others

減人自益-To reduce another's fair share of benefits

以惡易好-To trade the worthless for the valuable

以私廢公-To sacrifice public benefit in order to forward private gain

竊人之能-To steal another's know how

蔽人之善-To suppress or downplay another's good deeds

形人之醜-To publish or gossip about the scandals of others

訐人之私-To invade another's privacy

耗人貨財-To waste another's resources  
離人骨肉-To separate family members  
侵人所愛-To threaten or violate someone or something loved by others  
助人為非-To help others commit outrageous acts  
逞志作威-To abusively throw one's weight around  
辱人求勝-To seek victory by insulting and humiliating others  
敗人苗稼-To sabotage another's crops  
破人婚姻-To break up another's marriage harmony  
苟富而驕-To gloat over unjust wealth  
苟免無恥-To be shameless after evading just punishment  
認恩推過-To steal credit and shift the blame  
嫁禍賣惡-To scapegoat and frame others  
沽買虛譽-To purchase false honors  
包貯險心-To be vicious at heart  
挫人所長-To suppress or cover up another's achievements  
護己所短-To conceal one's own faults or shortcomings  
乘威迫脅-To threaten and coerce  
縱暴殺傷-To allow brutality and massacres  
無故剪裁-To waste clothes  
非禮烹宰-To eat meat excessively (i.e. outside of festivities)  
散棄五穀-To waste food and grain  
勞擾眾生-To use forced or unfree labor  
破人之家，取其財寶-To commit burglaries  
決水放火，以害民居-To commit arson and intentional flooding  
紊亂規模，以敗人功-To manipulate the markets  
損人器物，以窮人用-To vandalise or sabotage others' property  
見他榮貴，願他流貶-To wish that the honored be disgraced  
見他富有，願他破散-To wish that the rich be impoverished  
見他色美，起心私之-To lust after another's beauty  
負他貨財，願他身死-To wish death upon your creditors  
干求不遂，便生咒恨-To be angry after having unreasonable

requests turned down.

見他失便，便說他過-To callously jeer at another's failure or misfortune by attributing it to divine punishment

見他體相不具而笑之-To mock the disfigured or disabled  
見他材能可稱而抑之-To belittle another's praiseworthy talents  
埋蠱厭人-To use black magic against others  
用藥殺樹-To poison trees and plants  
恚怒師傅-To treat one's teacher with angry disrespect  
抵觸父兄-To verbally abuse one's father or elder brother  
強取強求，好侵好奪-To encroach and violate another's rights  
擄掠致富-To become wealthy through looting and plunder  
巧詐求遷-To obtain promotions with schemes and tricks  
賞罰不平-To reward and punish unfairly  
逸樂過節-To party excessively  
苛虐其下，恐嚇於他-To bully subordinates and rule by fear  
怨天尤人-To hate heaven and blame men  
呵風罵雨-To curse and complain about the weather  
鬥合爭訟-To encourage lawsuits or prosecutions  
妄逐朋黨-To create feuding factions or partisan gangs  
用妻妾語，違父母訓-To side with the slander of one's wife and

turn against one's parents.

得新忘故-To favor the new and discard the old  
口是心非-To say what the heart does not believe  
貪冒於財，欺罔其上-To defraud one's employers  
造作惡語，讒毀平人-To destroy the innocent with libel  
毀人稱直-To destroy another's reputation and consider it just  
罵神稱正-To self righteously blaspheme Buddhas or Bodhisattvas  
棄順效逆-To go against nature

背親向疏-To turn one's back on one's parents and favor others  
指天地以證鄙懷，引神明而鑒猥事-To swear oaths to Heaven and Earth and invoke the spirits to prove one's feigned innocence

施與後悔-To regret after having given alms  
假借不還-To borrow without intention to return or repay  
分外營求-To seek what one does not deserve  
力上施設-To exhaust oneself in mind and body to realise one's goals  
淫慾過度-To have excessive sexual desires ; to be promiscuous  
心毒貌慈-To hide cruelty under a gentle facade  
穢食餒人-To serve food unfit for consumption

左道惑眾-To deceive the public with false and evil ideas

短尺狹度，輕秤小升-To use false scale and weights

以偽雜真，採取姦利-To adulterate and make unjust windfalls

壓良為賤-To force lowliness upon the kind and gentle

謾驀愚人-To entrap or deceive those of low intelligence

貪婪無厭-To be greedy without measure

咒詛求直-To falsely swear that one is telling the truth

嗜酒悖亂-To be a boorish drunkard or violent addict

骨肉忿爭-To hate and quarrel with one's siblings and relatives

男不忠良，女不柔順-To be a dishonorable man or harsh woman

不和其室-To hate or quarrel with your wife

不敬其夫-To hate or quarrel with your husband

每好矜誇-To exaggerate one's achievements and skills

常行妒忌-To be often jealous and envious

無行於妻子-To fail to support one's wife or raise one's children

失禮於舅姑-To (as a woman) disrespect one's parents in law

輕慢先靈-To neglect to honor one's ancestors

違逆上命-To be insubordinate to one's manager or employer

作為無益-To refuse to accrue merit and instead idle away one's time

懷挾外心-To favor outsiders over one's own blood and kin

自咒咒他-- To curse oneself and or curse others

偏憎偏愛-To favor what one should not favor and hate what one should embrace.

越井越灶 -To hop over stoves and wells [deities such as the Hearth Spirit exist in stoves].

跳食跳人-To step over another person's body or food [a disrespectful taboo]

損子墮胎-To encourage or perform abortions

行多隱僻-To engage in evil under the cover of secrecy

晦臘歌舞 -To dance and sing at the end of each lunar month and the last day of the lunar year [when the Heart Spirit reports your monthly/annual good or bad deeds].

朔旦號怒-To be angry during sunrise of the 1st lunar day of the month

對北涕唾及溺-To spit or urinate at the Northern Direction [where the Gods and Deities reside].

對灶吟詠及哭-To weep or revel in front of the stove

又以灶火燒香-To burn incense with stove fire

穢柴作食-To cook with unclean fuel [offends Hearth Spirit]

夜起裸露-To be nude a night [offends the ghosts and spirits—which exist everywhere, both in one's home and outside].

八節行刑-To punish offenders during the equinoxes and solstices

唾流星，指虹霓，輒指三光-To spit at comets, point at rainbows, or point at the Sun, Moon and Stars [as deities are associated with them].

久視日月-To gawk at the Sun and Moon

春月燎獵-To hunt in spring [when animals are mating]

對北惡罵-To shout insults at the Northern Skies

無故殺龜打蛇-To kill snakes and turtles without just cause

如是等罪，司命隨其輕重，奪其紀算。算盡則死；死有餘責，乃殃及子孫。

**The Spirit Magistrates of Destiny measure all such offences carefully, and shorten lifespans accordingly. If at death there is still a surplus of wickedness yet unpunished, it will fall upon their descendants.**

又諸橫取人財者，乃計其妻子家口以當之，漸至死喪。若不死喪，則有水火盜賊、遺亡器物、疾病口舌諸事，以當妄取之值。

**Those who have obtained the wealth of others through cruel and unreasonable ways will see their spouses, children and family members bear the punishment. They will either die, or if not, then floods, fires, robbers, losses, diseases, litigation and the like will dissipate the ill gotten portions.**



又枉殺人者，是易刀兵而相殺也。取非義之財者，譬如漏脯救饑，鴆酒止渴；非不暫飽，死亦及之。

**Those who unjustly killed others will themselves be caught in wars and massacres. The one who accrues unjust wealth is one who attempts to satiate his thirst and hunger with poisoned wine and putrid meat. Not only will they not be relieved, but their end is death.**

夫心起於善，善雖未為，而吉神已隨之；或心起於惡，惡雖未為，而凶神已隨之。其有曾行惡事，後自改悔，諸惡莫作，眾善奉行，久久必獲吉慶；所謂轉禍為福也。

**Whenever virtuous thoughts arise, auspicious deities are already present, and whenever evil ideas are entertained, wicked spirits manifest—the deed need not yet be done for this to happen. If those who have committed much evil could repent, and thereafter embrace virtue and eschew vice, then they shall reap happiness and good fortune after a while. This is to turn misfortune into fortune.**

故吉人語善、視善、行善，一日有三善，三年天必降之福。凶人語惡、視惡、行惡，一日有三惡，三年天必降之禍。胡不勉而行之？

**The good man is virtuous in speech, looks only at that which is virtuous, and is kind in conduct. Thus, he accrues three good deeds a day. In three years, Heaven is bound to bestow blessings upon him. The mean man is evil in speech, gazes at vice and is wicked in conduct. As he accrues three evil deeds a day, Heaven is bound to smite him with misfortune in three years. Thus, who could afford not to heed this tractate?**